



Public Service Commission of Wisconsin

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PSC Responds to Governor's Conserve Wisconsin Initiative Will Take a Close Look at a New Clean Coal Technology

MADISON – Last week, Governor Jim Doyle, as part of his Conserve Wisconsin Initiative, called on the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSC) and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to study a new clean coal technology and its suitability for Wisconsin. At an Open Commission Meeting today, the PSC took the first step to analyze integrated gasification combined cycle (IGCC) technology.

“This is an important step in the groundwork Governor Doyle is laying for our future energy and environmental policy in Wisconsin,” according to PSC Chairperson Daniel Ebert. “A thorough cost-benefit analysis of IGCC technology will position Wisconsin to be ready to adopt the new technology when the time is right—when the technology is reliable and cost effective.”

At the meeting today the Commission discussed the need for a study on IGCC technology to explore its potential to meet Wisconsin's future energy needs. Chairperson Ebert asked Commissioner Mark Meyer to lead the effort on behalf of the PSC.

“I applaud the Governor's foresight in calling for an analysis of IGCC technology,” Commissioner Meyer said. “We need to know if the new technology is right for Wisconsin, if the technology is proven and if it can be built at a reasonable cost.”

A study group including stakeholders from environmental and customer groups, electricity providers and labor will be convened to review the new technology. The two agencies will also seek input from the public. A report to the Governor is anticipated next spring.

IGCC technology uses intense pressure and heat to convert coal into gas. The gas goes through a cleaning process and is then burned in a combined cycle gas turbine to generate electricity. Air emissions from the new technology are significantly lower than current coal-generation technologies but questions remain about the cost and reliability of the new technology.

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